

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**LIGHTHOUSE**  
WRITERS WORKSHOP



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# MISSION AND VALUES

The mission of Lighthouse Writers Workshop is to provide the highest caliber of artistic education, support, and community for writers and readers in the Rocky Mountain region and beyond. We strive to ensure that literature remains accessible and relevant in the culture, and that individuals achieve their fullest potential as artists and human beings.

- 1.** Lighthouse attracts literary types of all ages and from all walks of life, inviting them to connect with our programming and community, both to enrich their art and enrich their lives.
- 2.** Lighthouse provides a lifelong educational environment that fosters the artistic, intellectual, and personal growth of its community and provides continuing support as they embark on successful careers and productive lives as artists and individuals.
- 3.** Lighthouse continually elevates its educational and artistic standards, remaining open and responsive to changing conditions in the worldwide literary arts scene.
- 4.** Lighthouse attracts and retains talented and renowned faculty members in all disciplines by providing a collaborative work environment and involving them fully in the artistic and educational life of the community.
- 5.** Lighthouse upholds its commitment to a diverse community by nurturing an inclusive, supportive, and welcoming environment. We also deeply believe in the importance of lifting up the voices of those who've been traditionally marginalized or ignored—persons of color, refugees, the homeless, LGBTQ individuals, and others.
- 6.** Lighthouse takes an active role in preserving the future of the literary arts by providing exemplary arts education programs, encouraging its members and youth to serve as advocates for the literary arts in society.
- 7.** Lighthouse tirelessly promotes the belief that writing and reading create a deep understanding of ourselves and others, and thereby encourages compassion and empathy in our society.

# DIRECTOR'S LETTER

MICHAEL HENRY, EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER

**"Neither the writer nor the reader can save the world  
by themselves. Or escape it entirely."**

**—Amitava Kumar, 2024 Lit Fest Visiting Instructor, Author of *Immigrant Montana*, *My Beloved Life*, and *The Blue Book: A Writer's Journal***

Dear Lighthouse Community,

Our first full year in our new home on York Street, 2024 proved to be a time of transitions, triumphs, challenges, and breakthroughs. We're still settling in, but it's been heartwarming to see the literary community come alive in our new home and contribute so much to the organization.

In response to community interest, we added new programming and expanded our tried-and-true offerings, resulting in robust growth:

- We hosted our largest Lit Fest ever, featuring visiting authors Mark Doty, Danielle Evans, Claire Messud, T Kira Madden, Vanessa Hua, and more. Attendees came from all over the country and the world.
- We added two weekend mini-festivals focused on specific genres, like Nonfiction Fest and YA Fest.
- Our free, popular, and transformative Hard Times workshops expanded into Boulder at the Public Library, into Five Points at Blair Caldwell, and we re-instituted free workshops at The Gathering Place day shelter.
- Weekly workshop sessions grew at a solid pace—over 16%—as did Lit Fest 2024, which grew 8% year-to-year.
- The youth program grew at a 5% pace, despite a program overhaul and staff transition.
- In addition to our model two-year program, The Book Project, we piloted a one-year mentor-based model as part of our ongoing Post-Grad Year program, which will inspire new year-long programs in the future.



# DIRECTOR'S LETTER

(CONTINUED)

- The Community Engagement team ran very successful Writing in Color and Queer Creatives Fests, and continued integrating these affinity group activities into the wider adult educational programming—in weekly workshops, weekend mini-fests, and Lit Fest—something we'll continue to grow in future years.
- All the while, our members experienced great publishing success, with over 30 books getting published or under contract, several community anthologies, and hundreds of individual poems, short stories, essays, and films making their way into the world, which just shows the talent of this community and the dedication of our amazing faculty. Eight Lighthouse members and faculty were nominated for Colorado Book Awards, and three took home awards.

Financially, 2024 proved to be a challenging year, but a marked improvement on 2023. Cost overruns in the final stages of building 3844 York required the organization to borrow funds for the short term, and that, combined with the increased overhead expenses of the new building (as well as inflationary pressures), made cashflow difficult to predict and control. Thanks to the calm and expert oversight of the Board Finance Committee, and the incredible support of the Lighthouse community—especially our staff and faculty—we were able to navigate these straits, and 2025 began on markedly more solid financial footing.

All through these challenges, our mission and dedication to the community remained the same. Our renewed focus on meeting people and hearing their stories, whether in workshops, at events, or via cultivation efforts, has sustained and renewed our sense of purpose. We've met hundreds of new community members since we moved, but just as remarkably, we've reconnected with dozens of writers we hadn't seen in years, which was wonderful. As a collective, we've wrestled with the fate of the literary arts in a time of reduced reading, a changing landscape for the book business, and a general atmosphere of cultural peril. Our conclusion will surprise few people reading this: books, writing, and literary community are more crucial now than ever.

As we approach our 28th anniversary, we remain humbled and surprised by our good fortune. We have a deeply devoted community that cares, and I can't possibly thank you enough for that.

Onward,  
Michael Henry, Executive Director & Cofounder

# BY THE NUMBERS

## 2024 AT A GLANCE



### PROGRAMS

#### ADULTS

571 workshops

9,284 participants

\$825,230 in revenue

#### YOUTH

45 workshops

444 participants

\$119,324 in revenue

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

255 workshops

3,801 participants



### TUITION ASSISTANCE

#### ADULTS

\$88,144 awarded

#### YOUTH

\$8,555 awarded



### VIRTUAL VERSUS IN-PERSON

#### ADULTS

41.3% virtual, 58.6% in-person

#### YOUTH

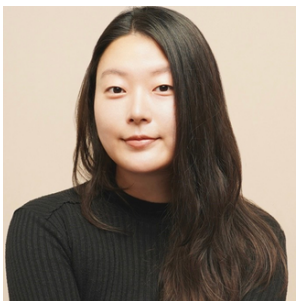
29.2% virtual, 70.8% in-person

# HIGHLIGHTS

## 2024 AT A GLANCE

### THE BOOK PROJECT SUCCESSES

The Book Project is a two-year program aimed at getting writers to the finish line with their books. We have seen many successes recently from our graduates! Some successes include:



#### **“AND THE RIVER DRAGS HER DOWN” BY JIHYUN YUN**

A 2023 graduate of the program, Jihun Yun’s debut young adult novel, published by Knopf, will be released in October of 2025. Yun was the recipient of a fellowship with Lighthouse.



#### **“A PROTEST HISTORY OF THE U.S.” BY GLORIA BROWNE-MARSHALL**

EMMY Award-winning writer of “Your Democracy,” Gloria Browne-Marshall will release “A Protest History of the U.S.” with Beach Press in April of 2025.



#### **“THE TRAGEDY OF TRUE CRIME” BY JOHN J. LENNON**

A 2022 graduate of the program, John J. Lennon gives a unique perspective on crime from within the walls of the New York prison system. He received a fellowship from Lighthouse to turn his journalistic efforts into a book.

# HIGHLIGHTS

(CONTINUED)

## COMPASS

During the 2024-25 school year, Lighthouse launched an initiative with Aurora Public Schools to offer on-site after-school programming called COMPASS. Lighthouse instructors incorporate play in their lessons and students learn to share work and listen to others in a supportive and compassionate way.

Even students who were resistant to writing ended up creating wonderful stories, artwork, poems, and comic strips, experiencing pride in their work and excitement towards future writing. One student shared, “Creative writing is my favorite class” after being with us for just a few weeks.

## WRITE TO CONNECT

Lighthouse was proud to accept the Arts in Society grant to fund their Write to Connect program. This program is an eight-week creative writing workshop for front-line staff at local social service organizations, offering a space for participants to engage with the literary arts to process their experiences—including highs and lows; triumphs and traumas—and build connections and camaraderie with others.

**“It's not just writing;  
it's medicine. [The class]  
shortens the distance between  
silence and speech,  
between suffering and  
expression.”**

—Faculty member  
Theresa Rozul Knowles



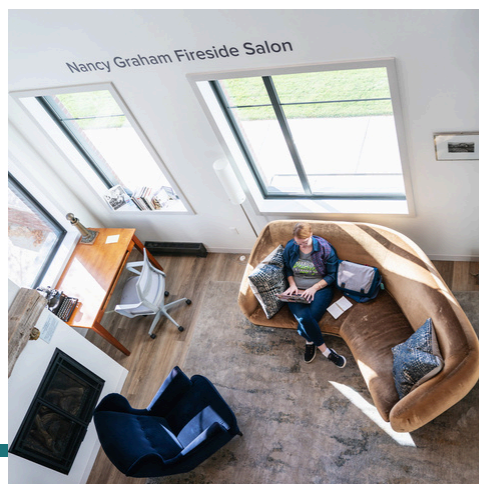


# FINANCIAL REPORTS

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION 2023-24

### ASSETS

	2024	2023
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 82,526	\$ 291,345
Accounts receivable, less reserve for credit losses of \$14,288 (2024) and \$1,061 (2023)	408,580	164,254
Promises to give, less allowance for doubtful promises of \$0 (2024) and \$0 (2023)	119,125	109,096
Pledges receivable, less allowance for doubtful pledges of \$0 (2024) and \$25,000 (2023)	7,333	112,852
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	5,336	7,500
Total current assets	622,900	813,004
Investments and receivables:		
Rose Community Endowment	110,404	106,081
Accounts receivable, noncurrent	170,939	180,769
Pledges receivable, noncurrent	-	50,000
Promises to give, noncurrent	-	50,000
Other noncurrent assets:		
Building, furniture, equipment and website, net	8,190,978	8,379,875
Operating lease right-of-use asset, net of accumulated amortization of \$2,259 (2024) and \$551 (2023)	4,974	6,682
Total noncurrent assets	8,477,295	8,773,407
TOTAL ASSETS	\$9,100,195	\$9,586,411





# FINANCIAL REPORTS

(CONTINUED)

## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

	2024	2023
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 75,946	\$ 222,759
Payroll liabilities	130,814	85,589
Deferred revenue	1,055,322	871,073
Current portion of long-term debt less issuance cost of \$2,772 (2024) and \$6,657 (2023)	245,376	539,340
Operating lease liability	4,974	6,682
Class deposits	6,347	5,175
Total current liabilities	1,518,779	1,730,618
Noncurrent liabilities:		
Long-term debt less issuance costs of \$20,584 (2024) and \$23,359 (2023)	3,560,062	3,632,873
Total liabilities	5,078,841	5,363,491
Net Assets		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	3,694,880	3,887,348
Board designated	8,056	7,463
With donor restrictions:		
Purpose restricted	204,966	229,387
Endowment fund	113,452	98,722
Total net assets	4,021,354	4,222,920
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$9,100,195	\$9,586,411



# FINANCIAL REPORTS

(CONTINUED)

	2024		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Support, revenue and gains:			
Earned income	\$ 1,931,661	\$ -	\$ 1,931,661
Memberships	93,486	-	93,486
Contributions and special events	742,885	85,000	827,885
In-kind donations	13,887	-	13,887
Investment income	1,054	7,630	8,684
Federal solar credit rebate	27,391	-	27,391
Gain on sale of fixed assets	742	-	742
	<u>2,811,106</u>	<u>92,630</u>	<u>2,903,736</u>
Satisfaction of program restrictions	102,321	(102,321)	-
Total support and revenue	<u>2,913,427</u>	<u>(9,691)</u>	<u>2,903,736</u>
Expenses:			
Workshops	1,959,391	-	1,959,391
Other activities	354,401	-	354,401
Management and general	516,829	-	516,829
Fundraising	274,681	-	274,681
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>3,105,302</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,105,302</u>
Changes in net assets	(191,875)	(9,691)	(201,566)
Net assets, beginning of year	<u>3,894,811</u>	<u>328,109</u>	<u>4,222,920</u>
Net assets, end of year	<u><u>\$3,702,936</u></u>	<u><u>\$318,418</u></u>	<u><u>\$4,021,354</u></u>

# DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

**Lighthouse extends a sincere thank you to our generous supporters.**

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**LIGHTHOUSE**  
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